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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

2. When asked to comment on the small number of Soviet applications for import permits approved during this period and the total absence of applications or approvals for export permits, [REDACTED] the dearth of approvals might be attributed to a certain extent to disagreement within the Ministry of Trade as to which agency is henceforth to be assigned the responsibility of approving or disapproving these applications. [REDACTED] called attention to the fact that not all Soviet-sponsored export or import transactions necessarily clear through the Ministry of Trade, although Abteilung 24 of the Ministry has the official function of dealing with the Soviets in trade matters. Austrian firms may submit their applications for export or import permits directly to the Aussenhandelsstelle (which has superseded the Warenverkehrsbuero in this respect) for investigation and final decision. Thus, USIA firms and USIA middlemen might obtain permits without reference to the Trade Ministry. [REDACTED] that the Aussenhandelsstelle, as did the Warenverkehrsbuero, submits to the Allied Council a list of all import or export permits granted. [REDACTED] a study of this list would show which USIA-controlled firms or USIA middlemen have received permits directly from the Aussenhandelsstelle without reference to the Ministry of Trade.

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NO CHANGE in Class. ☐☐ DECLASSIFIED

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